

REMARKS

Applicants and the undersigned reviewed the pending Office Action carefully before preparing this response. Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Nonetheless, in light of the positions presented herein, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Applicants acknowledge and appreciate acceptance of the previously-filed declarations and corresponding withdrawal of several rejections.

Several claims were again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a), as anticipated by Billancia. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's concern, but respectfully disagree. Nonetheless, claim 11 is hereby amended to recite one pyridine ligand at one terminus of the polymer component and bonded thereto with (i.e., directly) either an ether or an amine bond linkage. Support for such an amendment is found throughout the specification, in particular on page 5 with reference to several figures. As such, there is no anticipation. The rejection should be withdrawn, with the subject claims allowed to proceed toward issue.

Several claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Kambe. Again, Applicants appreciate the Examiner's concern, but respectfully disagree. Kambe is directed to inorganic particles dispersed in a polymer matrix. Claim 1 is hereby amended, without prior art concern or further limitation, to more clearly recite a patentable distinction over the polymer-particle blend of Kambe. Support for such an amendment can be found throughout the specification, in particular on page 14 with reference to the numerous examples and the nanoparticles characterized therein. With regard to claim 20, Kambe does not describe displacement of one ligand with another. Accordingly, there is no anticipation. The rejection should be withdrawn, with the subject claims allowed to proceed toward issue.

Several claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over either Billancia or Kambe in view of Baglin. Again, Applicants appreciate Examiner's concern, but respectfully disagree. Even so, claim 6 is hereby amended to clarify the ligand

coupling terminus and a patentable distinction over Billancia. With respect to dependent claim 21, Kambe is deficient with respect to independent claim 20 for reasons of the sort discussed above. Baglin does not address those deficiencies, and the combination of references fails to provide Applicants' invention. As such, there is no *prima facie* obviousness, the rejection should be withdrawn and the subject claim should be allowed to proceed toward issue.

This application is now believed to be in condition for full allowance. Consistent therewith, favorable action is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone should any issue remain. Thank you for your help and consideration.

Respectfully submitted:

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